

The Regulatory Veterinarian

I served as a racetrack regulatory veterinarian for 20 years, having been employed as Association Veterinarian at Balmoral Park, Sportsman's Park, Arlington Park, Hawthorne Racecourse, Hialeah Park, Gulfstream Park and Calder Race Course.

My charge as a regulatory veterinarian is to prevent injury; mitigate injury should it occur; and afford prompt, humane euthanasia when an injury cannot be mitigated. Very simply, my obligation is to the horse and I answer to my conscience.

In order to meet my responsibilities to the horse, my activities include: pre- and post-race soundness evaluation; triage of racing injuries; medical record keeping; implementation of pre- and post-race testing programs; research collaboration with academic institutions; management of herd health, equine infectious disease and environmental disease issues; policy development and rule making; racetrack media representation; and liaison between horsemen, racetrack management, governmental regulatory agencies, and private veterinary practitioners.

The role of the racing regulatory veterinarian has dramatically expanded in recent years while, unfortunately, the number of regulatory veterinarians has not. Effective regulatory service requires a complex skill set and the racing industry must work creatively to attract and keep qualified individuals in these positions. Further efforts must be made to efficiently utilize their skills by delegating non-veterinarian specific tasks to qualified staff.

As the focus of this panel is racing injuries, the following is a general description of race day injury prevention measures taken by regulatory veterinarians:

- 1) Morning pre-race exams assess the horse in the stall and in motion.
- 2) Horses are monitored by a veterinarian from the time they arrive in the paddock until they have safely exited the course after finishing the race. This includes observation of all horses warming up pre-race, in the starting gate, during the race, after finishing and prior to returning to their barns. At any time up to the start of the race, the regulatory veterinarian has the authority to require a horse be withdrawn for health, safety, or soundness concerns.
- 3) Horses with questionable status post-race are re-evaluated later in the day and/or the following morning.
- 4) Horses determined to be injured or unsound are declared to be ineligible to enter to race until their condition has been addressed to the satisfaction of the regulatory veterinarian.

This protocol is comparable to an individual being accompanied through each work day by a risk assessment advisor and emergency care physician.

Injury Reporting

Racing regulatory veterinarians have maintained racing injury records for many years; medical record keeping is not a new concept. However, it became evident when Barbaro was injured in 2006 that there was little commonality in the ways that records were established and maintained. Regulatory veterinarians at racetracks across the country were asked questions about injury type, frequency, and outcome. They were questions for which answers did not exist.

A national, standardized on-track injury reporting program was needed. An objective, scientific approach would be necessary to responsibly address the emotionally charged problem of racing injuries. Speculation swirls around each racing injury and it is important to remember that the plural of anecdote is not fact. While individual factors have been offered (some proved, some posited) as sources of increased risk, it is important to remember that racing injuries are multifactorial in origin. The interaction between multiple factors may likely be more important in injury generation than the identification of any single factor.

At the 2006 Grayson Jockey Club Welfare and Safety Summit I presented a proposal for a national standardized on-track injury reporting program. Over the next several months I contacted regulatory colleagues to solicit their participation. They, in turn, went to their racetracks or racing commissions to promote the program and secure authorization to participate. The program was initiated June 1, 2007 with commitments from 25 racetracks. Within a few weeks of announcing its start, the number of participating tracks was 34. Racetracks that had not been approached to participate requested to be included.

60 racetracks have committed to reporting in 2008. This number represents all but 3 racetracks that were asked to participate. These tracks represent a large number of race starts, but data submitted is representative only of those reporting tracks. To be a national program, all tracks must participate. Currently this program is voluntary but reporting should be required for all premises that conduct parimutuel wagering on live Thoroughbred racing.

Since inception, and through June 15, 2008, 2755 reports have been submitted. These reports reflect:

- 1) pre-race scratches initiated by regulatory veterinarians, (AM exams or on track) due to injury or unsoundness
- 2) non-fatal injuries observed by regulatory veterinarians on-track or at post-race testing sites
- 3) fatal musculoskeletal injuries sustained racing
- 4) racing fatalities due to other than musculoskeletal injury

The on-track injury reporting program has been underwritten by the Jockey Club. Incompass (a division of The Jockey Club Information Systems) has developed a secure on-line reporting module that will be launched in the very near future. The on-

line reporting system is being provided as a service to the industry; there will be no user fees for reporting into the database.

Industry shareholders including the Racing Commissioners International (RCI), the Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Agency (HBPA), the Jockeys' Guild have given strong support to this program. Many state racing commissions, racetrack managements, individual owners and trainers, as well as local industry affiliated groups have endorsed the program. We will continue to reach out to them, and others, in our efforts to increase program participation.

The on track injury reporting program was initiated as a Thoroughbred specific system. Currently the system is being reviewed to identify data collection modifications that may be required for implementation in Quarter horse racing.

Phase 2 of the reporting program has been initiated as a pilot program and expands reporting to include training, post-race detected, and and non-race related injuries. The collection of comprehensive and reliable data regarding training injuries is substantially more complex than that of race-related injuries. Scientific studies indicate that catastrophic racing injuries are the result of cumulative events, injury occurrence must be tracked comprehensively if precursors to catastrophic injuries are to be identified.

It is intended that this injury database will generate valid, composite statistics that identify national injury rates. Beyond that, it is hoped that this epidemiologic database will allow the identification of markers for horses at increased risk of injury and enhance injury prevention strategies. There is no end-point for data collection; this is by design a standing program. Over time, and as the database increases in size, it will be possible to investigate interactions between identified risk factors and ask more sophisticated questions with regard to injury prevention. With continued industry support this database will serve as a key scientific tool in protecting the health of the equine athlete.

The following is a list of tracks participating in 2008:

Aqueduct
Arlington Park
Bay Meadows
Bay Meadows Fair
Belmont Park
Calder Race Course
Canterbury Park
Churchill Downs
Colonial Downs
Del Mar
Delaware Park
Delta Downs
Ellis Park

Emerald Downs
Evangeline Downs
Fairgrounds
Fairmount Park
Fairplex
Finger Lakes
Fonner Park
Fresno
Golden Gate Fields
Gulfstream Park
Hawthorne Race Course
Hollywood Park
Hoosier
Humboldt Fair
Indiana Downs
Keeneland
Kentucky Downs
Laurel Park
Lone Star Park
Los Alamitos
Louisiana Downs
The Meadowlands
Monmouth Park
Northlands Park
Oak Tree at Santa Anita
Penn National
Philadelphia Park
Pimlico
Portland Meadows
Prairie Meadows
Presque Isle Downs
Remington Park
Retama
Sam Houston
Santa Anita
Santa Cruz @ Sonorita
Santa Rosa
Saratoga
Solano (Vallejo)
Stampede
Stockton
Suffolk Downs
Tampa Bay Downs
Timonium
Thistle Down
Turfway Park

Woodbine
Woodlands
Yavapai

Thank you for participating in the racing injury reporting program. I'm optimistic that this program will provide useful information to the industry as whole as well as individual racetracks and I am grateful for your contribution of time and energy. This success of this program is dependent the support of the racing regulatory veterinarians.

The official reporting start date is June 1, 2007. Some jurisdictions may elect to complete and submit forms prior to that time in order to have a complete meet's data recorded in the same format. For the purpose of national statistics, only data collected June 1 or later will be used.

All information submitted will be coded; no identifying information will be included in the database. Injury report forms are to be assigned case numbers by the reporting veterinarian as follows:

xx - 07 - 001
Racetrack code-year-individual case

While data submitted will be used to generate national statistics, individual racetrack data will returned to the submitting veterinarian in a database format for analysis at the discretion of that individual. No racetracks will be able to be identified by name or data submitted. No comparisons will be made between individual racetracks.

Form completion:

RACE DATA		HORSE DATA				Resident States
Surface	Race Class/Condition	Distance	Field Size	Age ^a	Weight Carried	
Dir	Claiming Price \$_____	One race: < 5 f				Step-in
Synthetic	Price factor _____	5 f	First Time		Post Position	>1-10 days
Turf	Price factor _____	5 1/2 f		(Month)		Track Resident
	6 f					
Condition	Maiden	6 1/2 f				
	Open	7 f				
	Beaten	7 1/2 f				
	Allowance	Mile				
	Purse \$_____	> Mile				
Fast		Two races:				
Good		6 f				
Muddy		6 1/2 f				
Sloppy		7 f				
Wet Fast		7 1/2 f				
	Stake	Mile				
	Purse \$_____	1 mile 70 yd				
Free		1 mile 1/16				
Good		1 mile 1/8				
Training		1 mile 3/16				
Stk		1 mile 1/4				
	Grade 3	1 mile 5/8				
	Grade 2	> 1 mile 3/8				
	Grade 1					
Or Turf						

If you are able to provide the name of the injured horse and the date of the injury it is not necessary for you to complete the fields outlined. That information will be accessed through the Jockey Club Information System.

If you will be providing horse names, please send a condition book with your first submissions.

Claiming Price \$_____
Price factor _____

The **claiming price factor** is determined by dividing the claiming price of the Injured horse by the lowest claiming price in that category (maiden, open, beaten) at the race meeting. It is hoped that this will provide an ability to identify comparable populations of claiming horses despite variability in daily purse distribution and claiming prices between racetracks.

Allowance races

For 'non-winners of a race other than', please indicate 1, 2 or 3 on the line next to NWX

For **starter allowance races**, please indicate the claiming price criteria and also complete the claiming price factor in the claiming section. (It is likely that starter allowance horses will be included in claiming horses for the purpose of data analysis.)

For **optional claiming races**, report data based on race condition under which injured horse was entered—either claiming or allowance.

Provide **Birth month** for 2 or 3 year olds.

It is not required that you provide **pre-race inspection findings**. If you choose to report that information, please provide a key for abbreviations/terminology used with your initial submissions.

Shoeing information identifies shoeing of the injured leg(s).

Please complete the injury section using the keywords provided on the second sheet. This will permit data searches based on specific diagnoses. If a diagnosis is not available, do not speculate. It is understood that there may be limited ability to follow up on some cases—i.e. ship-ins. Please note that there may be multiple injuries to a single limb or injuries to multiple limbs. Please indicate them separately as shown below.

	Limb	Category	Anatomic Region	Site	Injury Description
A	LF	Joint	Fetlock		Disarticulation closed
B	LF	Fracture	Distal Limb	Ses-bi-ax	Comminuted
C	LF	Soft tissue	Flexor tendon	SDF/DDF	Rupture
D	RF	Other			Grabbed 1/4

Triage Scoring is an attempt to identify case clinical presentation. Scoring is as follows:

- 0 No lameness observed on track
- I Grade III or less lameness, no obvious limb deformity/deviation
- II > Grade III lameness, no obvious limb deformity/deviation
- III Mild to moderate limb instability in 1 plane (closed injury)
- IV Severe instability in 1 plane (closed injury)
- V Severe instability in 1 plane (open injury); Severe instability in 2 or more planes (open or closed injury); open injury to joint or tendon, down horse

Stewards' Action—Pertains to objection/inquiry associated with the injured horse. If no inquiry/objection or if inquiry/objection is not associated with the injured horse, mark NA.

Prognosis: The subjective opinion of the regulatory veterinarian and/or the attending veterinarian

Outcome: Objective information based on actual case outcome

Send completed forms to:

Mary C. Scollay, DVM
Calder Race Course
PO Box 1808
Miami, FL 33055-0808

Please plan to send submissions no less frequently than once a month to permit prompt data entry and avoid end-of-the meet/year data pile ups.

If you have any questions, please contact me at: (305) 799-5049 or scollayvet@aol.com
Thank you again for your support of this project.

Limb	Injury Category	Anatomic Region	Site	Injury Modifiers		
LF RF LH RH BF BH All 4 Unknown NA	UNKNOWN					
	FRACTURE	Distal limb	Sesamoid-med Sesamoid-lat Sesamoid-biax MC ₃ / MT ₃ Carpal bones P ₁ / P ₂ P ₃ Splint-med Splint-lat Tarsal bones	Chip Condylar Cortical Oblique Slab Spiral Transverse	Incomplete Comminuted Displaced Non-displaced Closed Compound Degloved	
		NON-FRACTURE	Long bone	Humerus Femur Radius/Ulna Tibia	Lateral Medial Saggital Proximal Distal Mid	Dorsal Palmar Plantar Apical Basilar
			Axial skeleton	Skull / Spine Pelvis		
	SOFT TISSUE	Suspensory	Medial branch Lateral branch Body / Origin Check ligament Distal Ses. Lig	Proximal 1/3 Middle 1/3 Distal 1/3 Dist. to fetlock Origin	Desmitis Tendinitis Bow Avulsion Failure / Rupture Lacerated/Severed	
		Tendon Tendon Sheath	SDF DDF CDEXT	Strain Myalgia/Myositis	Reinjury	
		Muscle _____ Other _____				
	JOINT	Fetlock Carpus Interphalangeal Stifle Hock Other _____		DJD / OA Subluxation / Luxation Disarticulation Open / Closed D/P instability M/L instability		
	OTHER-MS			Laceration Puncture Grabbed ¼ Other _____	Run down sore Hematoma Foot bruise	
	NON-MS			Post exertional distress / Heat Stroke Synchronous dia. Flutter Cardiac arrhythmia EIPH—external hemorrhage Sudden Death Other _____		
Triage Scoring						

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 0 | No lameness observed on track |
| I | Grade III or lower lameness; no obvious limb deformity |
| II | >Grade III lameness; no obvious limb deformity |
| III | Mild to moderate limb instability in 1 plane; closed injury |
| IV | Severe instability in 1 plane; closed injury |
| V | Limb instability in 2 or more planes / loss of column of support (open or closed);
open: fx/joint capsule/tendon sheath |

Date: / /

Track: Race:

Horse:


Trainer:

Reporting Veterinarian:

Attending Veterinarian:

CASE #: - -							
Surface	Class/Condition	Distance	Field Size	Age*	Weight Carried	Residence Status	Intervals
Dirt	Claiming Price \$	<u>One turn:</u> < 4 ½ f				Ship-in	Previous start to injury: _____ days
Synthetic	Price factor	4 ½ f	Final Time		Post Position	>1 < 10 days	
Turf	Maiden Beaten Open	5 f 5 ½ f 6 f 6 ½ f 7 f 7 ½ f		(Month)		Resident	Previous work to injury: _____ days
Condition	Allowance MSW NWX NWS STR Price factor	Mile > Mile	Placing	Sex	Class	Previous Start	
Fast			Started Y N	Colt Horse	↓ ↑	_____/_____/_____ by _____	Injury to first work: _____ days
Good			Finished Y N	Filly Mare	No change NA	DNF NA	
Muddy		<u>Two turns:</u>	_____ by _____	Gelding Rig		Adj. time: _____	
Sloppy		6 f	Adj time: _____				
Wet Fast		6 ½ f	Jockey	Life Starts	Speed Figs	Last Pub Work	
		7 f					
		7 ½ f	Apprentice			_____/_____/_____ by _____	Injury to first race: _____ days
Firm	Stake Purse: \$	Mile					
Good	Overnight	1 mile 70 yd	Journeyman	Wins	Life Earnings	Distance/Cond. _____ f _____	
Yielding	Non-graded	1 mile 1/16	Injured: Y N				
Soft	Grade 3	1 mile 1/8	Claim History- previous 6 months			Time _____	
	Grade 2	1 mile 3/16				Rank _____/_____ _____	
	Grade 1	1 mile ¼					
Off Turf	Handicap: Y N	1 mile 3/8					
		> 1 mile 3/8					
			0	1	2	3	>3

	Limb	Category	Anatomic Region	Site	Injury Description
A					
B					
C					
D					

RACING	INCIDENT RELATED INFORMATION	TRIAGE SCORE	INJURY MANAGEMENT	EMERGENCY MEDICATIONS
 <p>XX- Gate Location X- Site injury first observed</p>	Lost rider Ran loose Equipment failure Clipped heels Stumbled Fell Collapsed Ducked Bolted Failed to maintain course Contact w/ other horse Impeded Checked Contact with rail / gate / vehicle Flipped Other _____	STEWARDS' ACTION NA Jockey- foul claim Stewards'-Inquiry DQ: Y N	NONE Kimzey splint Compression boot Robert Jones Bdg Ext. stabilization, other _____ Sling Rescue Sled Ambulance Other _____	NONE Acepromazine Butorphanol Detomidine Xylazine Pred sodium succinate NSAID Other _____
	NON-RACING	OUTCOME	COMMENTS	
	Pre-race: Official Veterinarian Scratch AM Paddock / Post Parade / Gate Soundness / injury / other Post race: Past wire / Returning After unsaddling Detention Barn Other: _____	Non-fatality Career Ending Injury Y N Unknown Fatality Euthanized (<72 hrs post injury) Died Unknown		